

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of making an article, such as a folder or portfolio, adapted to have a printed image thereon, said method comprising the steps of:

providing a member to be formed as or forming at least part of said article;

providing an image sheet to be bonded to said member;

printing an image on said image sheet on a first side thereof;

placing said image sheet in contact with said member at a second and opposite side of said image sheet; and

bonding said image sheet to said member.

2. The method set forth in claim 1 including the step of:

cutting said image sheet from a larger sheet of the same material as said image sheet prior to placing said image sheet in contact with said member.

3. The method set forth in claim 1 including the step of:

providing said image sheet and said member each formed of a flexible plastic material.

4. The method set forth in claim 3 including the step of:

bonding said image sheet to said member by pressing said image sheet to said member and applying RF energy to adhere said image sheet to said member.

5. The method set forth in claim 4 including the step of:

debossing said member to form an indentation therein while bonding said image sheet to said member.

6. The method set forth in claim 4 including the step of:

5 debossing said member to form an indentation therein prior to placing said image sheet in contact with said member and then carrying out the steps of placing said image sheet in contact with said member at said indentation and applying RF energy to bond said image sheet to said member.

7. The method set forth in claim 4 including the step of:

5 providing a debossing die, placing said image sheet on said debossing die and placing said member in engagement with said image sheet prior to applying energy to bond said image sheet to said member.

8. The method set forth in claim 2 including the step of:

5 printing said image on said image sheet as part of said larger sheet, said larger sheet comprising opaque pre-colored material, said printing comprising one of inkjet printing, photostatic printing, and thermal ribbon printing.

9. The method set forth in claim 8 including the step of:

providing an image from an image source by one of scanning and copying said image from said image source and  
5 transferring said image to a printing apparatus for printing said image on said image sheet.

10. The method set forth in claim 1 including the step of:

applying an ink receptive coating on said image sheet prior to printing an image thereon.

11. The method set forth in claim 10 including the step of:

providing a textured surface of said image sheet by one of calendering a surface of said image sheet prior to applying said coating and debossing a textured surface on said image sheet.

12. The method set forth in claim 1 including the step of:

laminating a transparent laminate sheet onto said image sheet over said image.

13. The method set forth in claim 2 including the steps of:

printing multiple images on said larger sheet and cutting multiple image sheets from said larger sheet.

14. The method set forth in claim 13 including the step of:

laminating a transparent laminate sheet to said larger sheet over said images.

15. The method set forth in claim 14 including the step of:

providing said image sheet of polyvinyl chloride.

16. The method set forth in claim 15 including the step of:

providing said laminate sheet of polyvinyl chloride.

17. A method of making an article, such as a folder or portfolio, adapted to have a printed image thereon, the method comprising the steps of:

5 providing a member to be formed as or forming at least part of said article;

providing a sheet of flexible plastic material adapted to be receptive to multiple printed images on one side of said sheet of flexible material;

10 transferring an image to be applied to said sheet of flexible material to a processor;

causing said processor to control a printer for printing multiple images on said sheet of flexible material;

15 cutting multiple image sheets from said sheet of said flexible material along predetermined contours of said images, respectively;

placing at least one of said image sheets in contact with said member; and

20 bonding said at least one image sheet to said member by engaging said at least one image sheet with a debossing die and applying RF energy to bond said at least one image sheet to said member.

18. The method set forth in claim 17 including the step of:

5 debossing said member to form an indentation therein to provide a guide for locating said at least one image sheet on said member prior to placing said at least one image sheet in contact with said member.

19. The method set forth in claim 17 including the step of:

placing said at least one image sheet on said debossing die and placing said member over said at least one  
5 image sheet prior to bonding said at least one image sheet to said member.

20. The method set forth in claim 17 including the steps of:

locating a guide device on said member for guiding the placement of said at least one image sheet on said  
5 member and placing said at least one image sheet on said member in a predetermined position as provided by said guide device.

21. The method set forth in claim 17 including the step of:

directing at least one light beam on a predetermined location on said member for guiding the  
5 placement of said at least one image sheet on said member.

22. The method set forth in claim 17 including the step of:

laminating a flexible transparent sheet onto said sheet of flexible material prior to cutting said image  
5 sheets from said sheet of flexible material.

23. The method set forth in claim 22 including the step of:

providing said sheet of flexible material and said transparent sheet of polyvinyl chloride, respectively.

24. The method set forth in claim 17 including the step of:

debossing said member to form an indentation therein while bonding said at least one image sheet to said member.

25. The method set forth in claim 17 including the step of:

providing said sheet of flexible material and said member of polyvinyl chloride.

26. The method set forth in claim 17 including the step of:

applying an ink receptive coating on said sheet of flexible material prior to printing images thereon.

27. An article of manufacture, such as a folder, portfolio, luggage tag, keyfob, memo pad and the like having a printed image thereon and manufactured by a process comprising the steps of:

5 providing a flexible member to be formed as or forming at least part of said article;

providing a flexible sheet of plastic material adapted to be receptive to one or more printed images on one side of said sheet of flexible material;

10 transferring an image to be applied to said sheet of flexible material to a processor;

causing said processor to control a printer for printing at least one image on said sheet of flexible material;

15 cutting at least one image sheet from said sheet of said flexible material along predetermined contours of said image;

placing said at least one image sheet in contact with said flexible member; and

20 bonding said at least one image sheet to said flexible member.

28. The article set forth in claim 27 wherein:

said at least one image sheet is bonded to said flexible member by engaging said at least one image sheet with a debossing die and applying energy to bond said at  
5 least one image sheet to said flexible member.